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Oral Tradition of Mount Budheg as a Cultural Site of the Tulungagung Community

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the role of the oral traditions of Mount Budheg as a cultural site that has historical and spiritual value for the people of Tulungagung. The oral traditions that developed around Mount Budheg include folk stories that have been passed down from generation to generation and have an important role in shaping local cultural identity. This research uses qualitative methods with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews and analysis of literature studies to support understanding of stories related to Mount Budheg. Interviews were conducted to obtain a direct perspective regarding the values contained in this oral tradition, as well as the efforts made to preserve it amidst current developments. The research results show that the oral tradition of Mount Budheg has a dual function as a means of education and a medium for transmitting local cultural values. Through performances of traditional arts such as ketoprak, especially by the Siswo Budoyo ketoprak group led by Mr. Siswondho H.S., folk stories about Mount Budheg are revived and introduced to the younger generation. This helps maintain the existence of oral traditions in Tulungagung, so that people remain connected to their cultural roots. Apart from that, ketoprak as a traditional art form also attracts tourists and contributes to cultural tourism in Tulungagung. The conclusion of this research is that the oral tradition of Mount Budheg plays a role as an important cultural site in preserving the history and local identity of the Tulungagung people. This tradition is not only a valuable cultural heritage, but also functions as a medium of intergenerational communication that strengthens social solidarity and connects society with ancestral values.

Keywords: *Oral Tradition, Mount Budheg, Cultural Site, Tulungagung Community*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran tradisi lisan Gunung Budheg sebagai situs budaya yang memiliki nilai historis dan spiritual bagi masyarakat Tulungagung. Tradisi lisan yang berkembang di sekitar Gunung Budheg mencakup cerita-cerita rakyat yang diwariskan turun-temurun dan memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk identitas budaya lokal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam serta analisis studi kepustakaan untuk mendukung pemahaman mengenai cerita-cerita yang terkait dengan Gunung Budheg. Wawancara dilakukan untuk memperoleh perspektif langsung mengenai nilai-nilai yang terkandung dalam tradisi lisan ini, serta upaya yang dilakukan untuk melestarikannya di tengah perkembangan zaman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi lisan Gunung Budheg memiliki fungsi ganda sebagai sarana edukasi dan media pewarisan nilai-nilai budaya lokal. Melalui pementasan seni tradisional seperti ketoprak, khususnya oleh kelompok ketoprak Siswo Budoyo yang dipimpin oleh Pak Siswondho H.S., cerita-cerita rakyat tentang Gunung Budheg dihidupkan kembali dan diperkenalkan kepada generasi

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muda. Hal ini membantu menjaga eksistensi tradisi lisan di Tulungagung, sehingga masyarakat tetap terhubung dengan akar budayanya. Selain itu, ketoprak sebagai bentuk seni tradisional juga menarik minat wisatawan dan memberikan kontribusi terhadap pariwisata budaya di Tulungagung. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa tradisi lisan Gunung Budheg berperan sebagai situs budaya yang penting dalam melestarikan sejarah dan identitas lokal masyarakat Tulungagung. Tradisi ini tidak hanya menjadi warisan budaya yang berharga, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai media komunikasi antargenerasi yang memperkuat solidaritas sosial dan menghubungkan masyarakat dengan nilai-nilai leluhur.

Kata Kunci: Tradisi Lisan, Gunung Budheg, Situs Budaya, Masyarakat Tulungagung

Introduction

Mount Budheg is the name of a mountain located in Tanggung Village, Campurdarat District, Tulungagung Regency, East Java. Mount Budheg, which has an altitude of 585 meters above sea level, is located on the outskirts of Tulungagung City and is in the middle of residential areas, and surrounded by rice fields, so access to the location of the mountain is quite easy. Mount Budheg is not only known for its natural beauty, but also as a cultural site rich in oral traditions of the local community. Oral tradition is a form of cultural heritage that is very important for the community, especially in Indonesia's cultural diversity. In Tulungagung Regency, East Java, there is a distinctive and high-value oral tradition, namely the Oral Tradition of Mount Budheg. Mount Budheg is not just a geographical location, but also a cultural symbol that holds various stories and knowledge that have been passed down from generation to generation. Through this oral tradition, the people of Tulungagung are able to maintain their cultural identity in the midst of an increasingly strong modernization trend (Aisyah, 2023). Around Budheg Mountain, various stories, myths, and legends have been passed down from generation to generation. From these oral traditions, it can create a distinctive cultural identity for the Tulungagung people.

The oral tradition of Mount Budheg as a cultural site of the Tulungagung Community in its existence has various unique stories. According to Agus Utomo, a historian and conservator of the cultural site of Mount Budheg, stated that "Mount Budheg is a place, where here there are traces of ancient civilization because Mount Budheg has been designated as an Ancient Volcano. In addition, the role of Mount Budheg related to local myths began with a story about the Tulungagung Chronicle, where there was a character named Joko Tawang who later became Joko Budheg. Well, when a ketoprak appeared with the theme of the Tulungagung Chronicle which raised the theme of the name of Mount Budheg and Roro Kembang Sore, the director of the ketoprak Pak Siswondho H.S had one goal, so that how the Tulungagung people

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always remember the toponyms of the place, so that wherever they are they always remember the name Kalangbret, Mount Budheg, Lembu Peteng and all the toponyms of that place are in Tulungagung. Well, our obligation here is to preserve, continue the cultural spirit inherited by Mr. Siswondho H.S as the director of the Siswo Budoyo ketoprak which until now in the current generation is still considered a legendary Tulungagung artist."

The oral tradition of Mount Budheg is an important part of the identity of the Tulungagung people that must be preserved. Each story that exists holds meanings and valuable lessons for people's lives. Therefore, it is important to continue to explore and document this oral tradition so that it remains alive in the memory of the community (Budi, 2023). The oral tradition of Mount Budheg is a very important cultural heritage for the people of Tulungagung. These stories passed down from generation to generation are not only entertaining, but also contain meaningful and valuable life lessons. This oral tradition is part of the identity of the local community. Therefore, it is important to continue to explore, document, and preserve this tradition so that it remains alive in the memory of the community, so that it can be passed on to future generations.

Finally, the oral traditions of Mount Budheg not only contribute to cultural preservation, but can also be a source of inspiration in facing the challenges of the times. In a world that is constantly changing, the values contained in these oral traditions remain relevant and can be a guide in living life. By understanding and appreciating this tradition, society can build a better and sustainable future (Zahra, 2022).

The formulation of the problem in this study is about what are the oral traditions of Mount Budheg as a cultural site of the Tulungagung Community that can be used as the identity of the Tulungagung Community. This study aims to find out the oral traditions on Mount Budheg that can be used as a cultural identity in the Tulungagung Community and to find out the existence of the oral traditions of Mount Budheg as a cultural site of the Tulungagung Community until now.

Research Methods

This research was conducted in Tanggung Village, Campurdarat District, Tulungagung Regency, East Java Province in October 2024. The subject of this research is a historian and custodian of the Mount Budheg cultural site named Mr. Agus Utomo. Meanwhile, the object of this study is the Oral Tradition of Mount Budheg as a Cultural Site of the Tulungagung

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Community. This study involved one informant. The methods used in this study are qualitative methods and data are obtained through field research and through a qualitative descriptive approach using literature studies. The instrument used in this study is an interview guide. Data collection was carried out by observation, interviews, documentation, and data analysis from related literature sources.

Results and Discussion

Traces of Ancient Civilization on Budheg Mountain

Mount Budheg in Tulungagung, East Java, has interesting traces of ancient civilization from a geological and archaeological point of view. Based on geological research, Mount Budheg is estimated to be an ancient volcano that was formed about 30 million years ago. In terms of geoheritage, the Mount Budheg area offers high scientific tourism potential because of its educational value and uniqueness. This mountain belongs to the Mandalika formation which is composed mostly of volcanic rocks from the Late Oligocene to the Early Miocene, showing the uniqueness of its geological formation. This potential is further explored for the development of geotourism, with a focus on scientific value, education, and environmental conservation. Mount Budheg has several points of high value to be used as educational tourism destinations, such as Budheg Peak which is one of the sites with high value in geotourism analysis, displaying panoramas and geological structures that are rarely found elsewhere. In relation to civilization, the presence of these volcanic rocks is often associated with the cultural and spiritual activities of the local community. The Mount Budheg site that connects geological and cultural heritage is a special attraction that is proposed to be developed as a geotourism area. The area also contains architectural relics and artifacts that are believed to be related to the history of the ancient settlements around it, thus combining geological and cultural aspects in one unique location.

Research shows that sites such as Mount Budheg have the potential to be developed as geotourism destinations that combine aspects of geological and cultural education. This geotourism approach allows tourists to understand the history of the earth while exploring the cultural values that exist in it. Based on research using the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) method, Mount Budheg has a high score for aspects of educational and scientific value, showing great potential as an education-based tourist attraction. Some points on Mount Budheg, such as the top of the mountain and the caldera wall, are considered to have high educational value that is rarely found in other regions. The development of geotourism is expected to enrich knowledge about geological history and promote the preservation of traditional culture around the mountain (Yusril Yudansa et al., 2023).

In the social realm, the belief of the local community in the magical and sacred power of Mount Budheg shows the synergy between nature and culture that forms the identity of the community around the mountain. This tradition is maintained through various rituals held in the mountain area, such as offering or salvation ceremonies aimed at ancestral spirits. This kind

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of practice not only shows a strong relationship between the community and the natural environment, but also becomes a means to maintain the balance of the mountain ecosystem through the prohibition of destructive activities. Therefore, the development of this area as a geotourism also requires an approach that pays attention to sustainability aspects, so that cultural and ecological values can be preserved together.

The Legend of Joko Budheg's Stone

The legend of Batu Joko Budheg is one of the most famous stories in the people of Tulungagung, East Java. This story tells the story of the eternal love between Joko Budheg, a handsome young man, and Roro Kembang Sore, a beautiful girl who comes from a noble family. This story is not only a heartwarming love story, but also illustrates the moral and spiritual values held by the local community. In this story, Joko Budheg faces a tough test to prove his loyalty, namely by asceticism at the top of Mount Budheg for 40 days and 40 nights. This exam not only tests the physical, but also mental and spiritual of Joko Budheg, reflecting the strong character that characterizes the hero in many folklore, said Agus Utomo as a historian and custodian of the Mount Budheg cultural site.

The story begins with Joko Budheg's interest in Roro Kembang Sore, who is very beautiful and has many admirers. However, to get his love, Joko has to face the challenges created by Roro Kembang Sore. The girl wants to make sure that Joko really loves her and is ready to sacrifice for their love. Roro Kembang Sore sets the conditions for asceticism at the top of the mountain, a challenge that is not easy and requires perseverance and patience. This challenge symbolizes the traditional values of Javanese society that value patience and sacrifice in relationships (Hussaini, 2023).

After Joko Budheg agreed to the challenge, he performed asceticism with full discipline. However, as time went by, Roro Kembang Sore began to doubt Joko's seriousness. With mixed feelings between love and doubt, he decides to look for Joko at the top of the mountain. Roro feels restless and worried that Joko will not return. After searching, he finds Joko lying helpless in his hermitage, but to his surprise, Joko has been turned to stone. These changes illustrate the consequences of immense sacrifice and love (Julianto, 2022).

Joko Budheg's transformation into stone has a deep meaning. In local cultures, stones are often considered a symbol of strength and resilience. The Joko Budheg stone is now an object of respect and a symbol of eternal love for the community. Many people come to the location to pray and hope that their love will also last forever. This legend is part of

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Tulungagung's cultural identity, where its people respect the traditional and spiritual values contained in it (Rizky, 2023).

This story not only tells the story of a love that ends tragically, but also highlights the relationship between humans and nature. Mount Budheg, the place where this legend takes place, has stunning natural beauty and is often considered a sacred place. The local people believe that this mountain is inhabited by spirits who maintain the balance of nature. This creates a deep respect for the environment, which is part of their cultural identity (Krisnadi, 2024).

The Joko Budheg Stone is now not only known as a symbol of love, but also as a tourist attraction that attracts the attention of many visitors. Many tourists come to witness the beauty of nature and feel the spiritual aura around the rock. Tourism development in this area helps promote local stories and culture to visitors from outside the area. This is a good example of how legends can contribute to local economic development through tourism (Sukardi, 2022).

The importance of preserving the legend of the Joko Budheg Stone lies in the values contained in it. The community strives to keep this story alive, both through teaching to the younger generation and through cultural events. By educating children about this story, they are expected to understand and appreciate their own cultural heritage. Education about this legend is a means to teach the values of loyalty, love, and sacrifice.

Spread of the Oral Tradition of Mount Budheg

The spread of oral traditions on Mount Budheg, Tulungagung, is a very rich cultural phenomenon, which is widely preserved through performing arts, one of which is ketoprak. Ketoprak Siswo Budoyo, led by Mr. Siswondho H.S., is one of the groups that plays a major role in maintaining the continuity of the oral tradition. Ketoprak, which is a typical Javanese folk theater, is an effective medium to convey stories, myths, and cultural values that have been passed down from generation to generation. Mount Budheg itself has many legends, which are often an important part of this ketoprak performance. Through the performance of Siswo Budoyo's ketoprak, folklore and oral traditions about Mount Budheg are not only introduced to the local community, but can also be witnessed by a wider audience, thus expanding the reach of the spread of the oral tradition (Rahmawati, 2021).

Ketoprak Siswo Budoyo often brings stories sourced from ancestral stories and legends around Mount Budheg, such as stories about mystical figures or historical events that the local

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community believes. This performance combines dialogues, gamelan music, and dance accompanied by a typical style of East Javanese stories, which allows the audience to not only enjoy the story but also feel an emotional connection with their culture. This process is important because ketoprak is not just entertainment, but also as an educational tool that teaches noble values, such as loyalty, courage, and wisdom. Ketoprak Siswo Budoyo, under the direction of Mr. Siswondho, has succeeded in packaging this oral tradition into an interesting form without losing the original essence of the story (Santoso, 2019).

The spread of oral traditions through ketoprak is inseparable from the active role of the community and the support of the local government in preserving local arts. Apart from being a means of entertainment, the Siswo Budoyo ketoprak performance also functions as a medium of communication that connects the old and young generations. This is very important to prevent the younger generation from forgetting the history and culture of their region. Through the medium of ketoprak, the oral tradition of Mount Budheg which has philosophical and historical significance remains alive and relevant in the midst of a growing society. The support from Mr. Siswondho as the leader of the ketoprak group has made the oral tradition of Mount Budheg able to survive and continue to be remembered in the hearts of the people of Tulungagung and its surroundings (Wahyuni, 2020).

Conclusion

The oral tradition that developed on Mount Budheg serves as an important cultural site for the Tulungagung community. This tradition not only reflects the values of beliefs and history that live in the local community, but also becomes a cultural identity that strengthens the bond between the older generation and the younger generation. Through the performance of traditional arts such as the Siswo Budoyo ketoprak, led by Pak Siswondho H.S., this oral tradition is introduced, preserved, and inherited. Ketoprak has become an effective medium that revives folklore from the Tulungagung chronicle and the legend of Mount Budheg, keeping the local community connected to their cultural roots. In line with social changes and modernization, the oral tradition of Mount Budheg is still relevant and developing. The ketoprak performance that raises stories from oral traditions is able to attract the attention of not only local people but also tourists who are interested in Javanese culture. The support of the local community and the local government further strengthens the position of this oral tradition as part of the intangible cultural heritage that must be preserved. Therefore, the oral

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tradition of Mount Budheg is not only a heritage of the past but also a cultural treasure that is still alive, dynamic, and has an important role in the social and spiritual life of the Tulungagung community.

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